

















FUNNY ANIMALS

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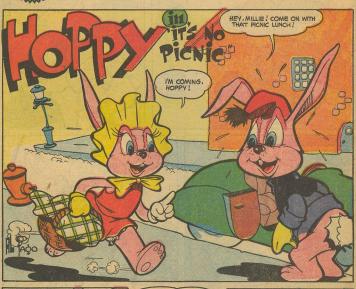
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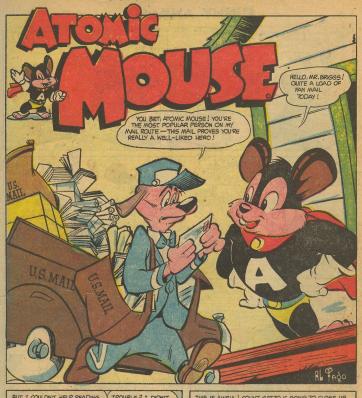




THE ONLY REWARD I'D LIKE



HOPPY GETS HIS WISH ---





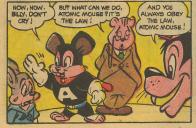










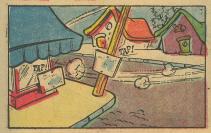












































NOAH'S LARK

It was June 10th in Happy Forest, and the noise of the hurrying citizens could be heard clear over in Rock Canyon. Everyone was, of course, making ready for the annual Happy Forest Children's Picnic. No one ever missed that picnic — at least none of the Happy Forest kids did.

Mother Beaver was busy baking all the pies that would be eaten, while Mother Rabbit was preparing dozens and dozens of hard-boiled eggs. From the homes of Mr. and Mrs. Chipmunk and the Bears and the Squirrel family, other delicious cooking smells came. Every 'year on Happy Forest Picnic Day, all the Forest mothers joined hands in cooking — one family cooked the weiners, while another took charge of making all the pickles. That way labor was divided up equally among the Forest mothers; then the food was pooled together for all to eat

The fathers of Happy Forest didn't have it easy either, since they had the job of getting the children ready to go. Cleaning ears and faces took time — and resulted in some of the noises heard coming from Happy Forest when the little animals objected to the soapy cloths.

But as you can see, this was no ordinary picnic day — it was a day when all would board Uncle Noah's ferryboat for a special trip to Noah's Island. It meant a day of swimming and playing on a beautiful, forested island, and a boat trip two ways. Not a child in Happy Forest was sick this day! Everyone was ready to go by ten o'clock in the morning, and the food:was ready too. Uncle Noah had the steam up in his ferryboat and was taking a few practice toots on his steam whistle.

Mother Rabbit's house was the scene of the gathering; from here the picnic would get underway, with Father Rabbit leading all the little forest animals to Uncle Noah's ferryboat.

And then it happened! Thunder was heard! And the sky began clouding up in a dark way which assured rain! Rain on Happy Forest Picnig Day! But it didn't matter to the little animals at all! They were just saying to each other while gathered outside the Rabbit House... but let's listen!

"Gee whiz!" said Billy Beaver, "I've been waiting for this picnic all year, and now it looks like it's going to go and rain and spoil everything!" "My father will get us there, you'll see!" said little Peter Rabbit proudly.

"We'll go, rain or no rain!" chorused the dozens of little animals gathered outside the Rabbit home.

But inside the Rabbit home, different ideas were rising. Mrs. Rabbit had just finished answering the telephone for the 11th time, when it rang again. She picked up the receiver and said:

"Hello? Oh, it's you, Airs, Beaverl What? If it rains, don't let little Billy go on the picnic? Well, all right, Airs, Beaver, I'll tell Mr. Rabbit about it! All the Forest mothers have been calling me this morning, ever since the thunder began!"

Mr. Rabbit sat glumly at the kitchen table, listening to his wife on the telephone. It would be his job to tell the children the picnic would be off. Looking out the window, he saw the first drops of grey rain coming down. Yes, there was no doubt about it now, it would rain before they could get to Uncle Noah's ferry-boat. Oh, gloom! How could he tell them!

Mrs. Rabbit confirmed his worst thoughts when she hung up the telephone once again.

"It looks like none of the mothers think their children should go on the picnic now that it's begun to rain," she said sadly. "And they were counting on it so much!"

"I think I feel worse than they do!" said Mr. Rabbit. "I have to tell them they can't go!"

Mr. Rabbit braced himself for what he had to do and started for the shed, where all the little animals had gathered.

"Hello, children!" Mr. Robbit greeted the animals as he entered the roomy woodshed, "I have something to tell you! Uh -"

"Is it a story? Are you going to tell us a story before we go on the picnic?" asked Monk Mink.

"That's a swell idea!" seconded Chester Chipmunk. "We can start the day with a good old story from Mr. Rabbit before we go on the picnic! No old rain can stop us, huh, gang!"

"No," they all shouted, "who cares about the rain!"

Well, you can see that Mr. Rabbit had a problem on his hands. How to tell the little animals that the big picnic was called off after all their plans! Mr. Rabbit looked at all the eager little faces staring up at him expectantly, and then he decided on a plan. He wouldn't

tell them they couldn't go on the picnicl But wait and see, dear reader; Mr. Rabbit, as you know, is a very smart rabbit, and not hare-

brained, like some.

"All right," he said, "I will tell you a story! And it's a story that took place on this same day many, many years ago, before any of you were born! It was a day for the annual picnic, and at that time Grandpa Noah owned not only a huge ferryboat, but a park to boot. He called his park Noah's Park, naturally enough, and he had a huge banner over his ferryboat which read "NOAH'S PARK."

"Well, kids," Mr. Rabbit went on, as the little animals listened with quiet but full interest, "from a distance, that sign only showed the capital letters, so that is said NOAH'S ARK. It was really something, was that big boat; it had a big broad deck, and on the deck old Grandpa Noah had built what looked like a house, so that when it rained all the animals could keep dry while on his boat.

"Came the day of the picnic, and it was my old Uncle Fudley's job to get the kids to the boat, just like it's my job to escort you kids

today. And you know somethin?"

"What!" screeched little Oscar Owl, and all the other animals laughed at his huge curiosity — he was so curious he fell off his perch when he yelled.

Mr. Rabbit went on. "It was the same kind of a day then! It began to rain! And the rain didn't seem bad enough to spoil a picnic, at least as far as the little animals were concerned! The parents didn't want the **BN** animals to go, but the kids insisted, so old Uncle Fudley got them all down to the boat. There was little Mary and Bill Beaver, and Chuck and Martha Hedgehog, and even I was there with Mrs. Rabbit — of course we were just kids in those days!"

"Gee!" geed little Billy Beaver, "those are my folks he's talking about!"

"And mine!" said Hector Hedgehog.

"Yes," said Mr. Rabbit, "there were two of every animal in Happy Forest on Noah's boat,

and many of them were your folks!

"Well, we started out in a mild drizzle, but we didn't mind because we were all warm and snug in the cabin on the deck of the boot. Then the rain came up hard! Oh, my, but did it ratin! We were headed for Noah's Island, but it was raining so hard Grandpa Noah just couldn't see to steer his boat! Time passed, and it became afternoon, so we ate our lunches.

"A few wise ones, mainly old Oscar Owl, who was a youngster then, and Freddy Fox, saved part of their lunches for later. And that was a smart move!"

"Why?" asked little Peter Rabbit.

"Because it rained and rained for four days and four nights, that's why! We were lost in that rain for all that time, and all we had to eat was scraps from our lunches! I can tell you we and mighty hunary!" said Mr. Rabbit.

"Wow!" exclaimed Tommy Turtle. "That makes me hungry thinking about it!" He broke out a hard-boiled egg from his basket and started nibbling at it. "But what happened

then!" he asked.

"I was wishing we'd never started!" said Mr. Rabbit. "On the third day we finally spotted Noah's Island through the mist, but by that time none of us were feeling like having a picnic. I remember the words of old Grandpa Noah exactly!

"'This is no picnic!' he said. And he was right! We decided to forget that picnic party, I can tell you! And if we'd used common sense and postponed the picnic in the beginning we'd never have had that trouble. We were mighty glad to get back to our dry warm homes in Happy Forest! Mighty happy, indeed!"

Just as Mr. Rabbit was finishing his story, he noticed that Mrs. Rabbit was standing in the doorway. She had heard the story, and she called him over to her. The little animals were all very quiet, thinking about Mr. Rabbit's story, as he went to talk to Mrs. Rabbit.

"You didn't tell them they couldn't go on the picnic, did you?" she asked kindly. She knew he had a soft heart and hated to tell people things that would hurt their feelings in any way.

"No," Mr. Rabbit said, "but just watch what happens!"

And then he asked, "Well, kiddies, who's ready to go on the annual picnic! I guess we can make it through this rain now!"

Silence greeted him. Then little Bunty Robbit spoke up. "Not me, Pop!" he shouted, "I'm going to have my picnic lunch right here!"
"Me, too!" echoed Billy Beaver. "You're not

going to see me get caught in any old rain!
I'm smarter than that!"

"Us, too!" chorused all the little animals, and they opened up their lunches happily.

As Mr. and Mrs. Rabbit walked back to their house, under an umbrella, that is, they heard the happy noises of children at games and at eating. It looked like it was going to be a happy picnic day after all, and the children and the parents would both be happy.

"You never told me you had an Uncle Fudley," said Mrs. Rabbit, curiously.

"I don't!" said Mr. Rabbit, and with a twinkle in his eye, he added, "but I haven't the heart to tell them that either!"

The End













































































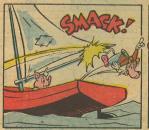




































































































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